Integrated Pest Management

Pests in your home can be a nuisance and bad for your health, but using pesticides to fight them can have dangerous side effects.

Pesticides are known to cause **eye, nose** and **throat irritation; skin rashes; stomach cramps; nausea; damage to the central nervous system and kidneys;** and **increased risk of cancer.**

Children, because they are still growing and developing, are especially vulnerable to the chemicals in pesticides.

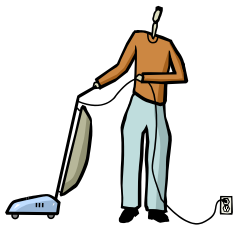
Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is an effective, safe, and environmentally sensitive approach to pest management. All pests need to survive are shelter, food, and water to survive; so there are three main ways to control them:

1) Make pests unwelcome in and around your home:

- Seal up small cracks, holes and crevices in visible areas, especially around pipes and wiring. Don't forget hidden areas such as under the kitchen sink!
- Pull soil or mulch back from the foundation of your house, keep tree branches and shrubbery well trimmed, and stack firewood and lumber away from the house and 18 inches off the ground.
- Remove water vessels like old tires, empty cans, and flower pots from the yard and be sure to fix any leaky pipes!
- Clean out gutters regularly, especially at the end of Autumn when a majority of leaves have fallen. Make sure gutters and downspouts are channeled away from your foundation.
- Pay particular attention to the maintenance and upkeep of your home's foundation. Moisture problems can cause major pest issues for homes with basements or crawlspaces.
- Screen crawl space vents and seal window frames.
- Do not pile up trash or recycling in the outside bins. Keep the bins closed.

2) Reduce food availability:

- Store foods and pet foods in tightly sealed containers.
- Store garbage in sealed containers and dispose of it regularly.
- Wipe up spills and crumbs right away. Clean your dirty dishes.
- Vacuum frequently.



3) Eliminate the pests themselves:

- Place traps and baits in infested areas as opposed to spraying pesticides.
- Use home-made repellents, such as the recipes on reverse side!

Inexpensive & Safe Pest Management Recipes

Spray Bottle of Soapy Water:
One tablespoon of dishwashing soap in a gallon of water. Spray soft-bodied insects like aphids, mealybugs, and spiders to kill them directly. To eliminate scent trails for ants, wipe down trouble areas.

Boric Acid (Borax):
Boric acids works as poison for most insects. Sprinkle the powder in trouble areas. While boric acid is a better alternative to pesticide, it can still be hazardous. **Be sure to keep out of reach of children** and only use in locations where it will not contact people or animals, such as behind counters and in crevices in the wall.

Corn Starch in Vacuum Bag: Placing corn starch in your vacuum bag suffocates ants and fleas.

If you must use pesticides, apply only as a last resort and use the lowest effective amount.

- Choose methods that reduce exposure, including spot applications like baits, traps, gels, and pastes.
- Read the label and follow the safety precautions.
- Protect your skin, eyes, and lungs while using pesticides; *always* wash your hands after use.

Pest Management Resources

Josiah Hill III Clinic (JHC)
www.jhillclinic.org (503) 802-7389

JHC provide outreach and education on indoor environmental health and lead poisoning prevention. Please visit JHC's website to learn more abut our healthy home workshops and our free blood lead screenings at various community centers throughout Portland.

Oregon Environmental Council:
www.oeconline/resources/resources/livinggreen/athome (503) 222-1963

A great downloadable brochure on "Safer Pest Control: Indoors and Outdoors," which includes a pest inspection fact sheet, 5 step pest management list, and an eco-friendly childcare fact sheet.

Environmental Protection Agency:
http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/controlling/resources (206) 553-2584

Supplies information for residents on how to solve pest problems in the home. Also links to numerous resources, including IPM guidelines, the pesticide label consumer initiative, IPM for housing managers and IPM in childcare centers.